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A Philosophical-Ontological Understanding of the Intellectual (and Human) Experience: The Intellectual Experience In Itself, For Itself, and Beyond Itself

Abstract : *This article proposes a philosophical-ontological approach to intellectual experience, grounded in three original and interrelated concepts introduced by the author: *noetic ontos*, *noetic experience*, and the *mind as being*. These concepts offer a deeper alternative to the dominant scientific and technological narratives, which often reduce the human mind to a functional mechanism defined by information processing, computation, or neurobiological determinism. By contrast, this framework understands the mind as an ontologically active reality—capable of generating meaning, reflecting upon itself, and transforming both internal and external dimensions of human experience. The article explores how intellectual experience unfolds within a dynamic interplay between the inner space where ideas are born and take shape, the reflexive process through which thought becomes part of the individual's intellectual identity, and the outer world where these ideas are materialized through creation, influence, and innovation. This multidimensional perspective underscores the role of the mind not merely as a container of knowledge but as a formative force, one that participates in the constitution of reality itself. At the same time, the article raises concerns about the growing trend to simplify or mechanize intellectual life by reducing it to mere cognition or information flow—an impoverishment that risks undermining the ontological and existential depth of human thought. In response, the author argues for the necessity of rethinking education and cultural formation in light of this complexity, advocating for the cultivation of *noetic awareness*, creative responsibility,*

and an intellectual ethos that honors the depth, mystery, and generative power of the human mind as being.

Keywords : intellectual experience, epistemology, ontology, mind, philosophy of mind, social philosophy, metaphysics, human nature, human condition, technology, art, culture, anthropology, creativity, AI, science, personality, psychology

Introduction

In this article, I propose a new understanding of the phenomenon and concept of intellectual experience by introducing the notions of noetic ontos, noetic experience, and the human mind as a being. This perspective seeks to move beyond rigid scientific and technological interpretations that tend to reduce intellectual experience to mere informational or algorithmic processes. In contrast, I advocate for a broader, deeper, and more complex vision of this crucial human phenomenon. The paradigm adopted in this article is a philosophical-ontological one, transcending the well-known psychological-scientific and cybernetic interpretations by engaging concepts and models from ontology and existential philosophy. In this context, the explanatory and argumentative discourse centers around the triad: existence in itself, existence for itself, and existence beyond itself. A key aspect of this approach is that intellectual experience is not presented as an isolated or particular phenomenon but rather as a fundamental and representative dimension of human experience as a whole.

On the Human Experience and Intellectual Experience

The concept and phenomenon of human experience, with its two meanings – as lived activity and as a repository/treasure of human knowledge encompasses biological life, emotion, thought, imagination, creativity,

adaptability, processes etc. What makes it special, unique, and defines its specificity is, of course, the mental, intellectual dimension: intellectual experience.

Throughout history, intellectual experience has been the driving force of progress, the only one capable of transforming the human condition and opening new horizons. Culture, science, philosophy, and art are expressions of that fundamental need to explore and understand. Every discovery, every idea, and every innovation results from an intellectual effort that transcends time and space, linking generations in a shared journey of knowledge. Thus, through intellectuality, through the intellectual act, through intellectual experience, human experience gains coherence and continuity, nourished by curiosity and the desire to leave a mark on the world.

There are few moments when intellect and intellectual experience are absent from human life and experience. Even the simplest gestures carry within them a component of thought, a reflection, a meaning. Daily decisions, the way we interact, the way we relate to the past and future – all are filtered through an intellectual lens, transforming existence into a continuous process of learning and evolution. Without this dimension, human experience would be fragmented, lacking cohesion and direction, condemned to repetition and stagnation.

Thus, if there is one element that truly defines humanity, it is intellect – the lived experience, activity, and intellectual experience. Human experience cannot be separated from the intellectual dimension, from intellectual experience, as it is the one that gives meaning and depth to every aspect of our existence. In this sense, however, we will demonstrate in this article that intellectual experience, the human intellect, and the human mind are far more complex and profound than described by science, cybernetics, neurology, or technology. This complexity and depth are also conferred by the phenomena, formations, and approaches we have referred to: noetic ontos, noetic experience, and the human mind as a being.

On the Intellectual Experience, Noetic Ontos, Noetic Experience and the Human Mind as a Being

Regarding the three concepts I propose for a new understanding of intellectual experience – noetic ontos, noetic experience, and the human

mind as being – they have been developed within the framework of a personal project aimed at proposing a new theoretical model for representing human personality, reintegrating the theory of being into its knowledge and definition. Within this project, I introduced the concept of personal ontos, which encompasses the existence and inner experience of the person, composed of multiple onto-formations: the affective ontos, the spiritual ontos, the projective ontos, and, among them, the noetic ontos. In this light, the intellect, the human mind, and intellectual experience reflect a phenomenon and mental process that are far more complex, profound, and multidimensional than what is posited by science and technology.

In relation to these considerations, one might ask: Would the great masterpieces of art, philosophy, and science have emerged in human history? Could we today live and appreciate them through the intellectual or aesthetic resonance they generate? Would humanity even be possible without this fundamental onto-noetic dimension of the mind? If intellect were merely an informational mechanism, as rigid science and cybernetics present it, would history, culture, and civilization exist in their current form?

This article strongly asserts: No.

The world, history, and culture as they exist today are possible because the human mind does not merely store and process information – it lives and creates through noetic experience, through intellectual experience augmented by the noetic ontos and noetic experience. Much of what has been built in human culture exists thanks to this onto-formation, this distinct ontological sphere, the noetic ontos, which manifests through living and noetic experience. It allows the human being to transcend immediate reality, generate meaning, and create beyond simple cognition. The noetic ontos is the foundation that enables the human mind to be a being, alive, dynamic, and creative.

Thus, this article does not represent the human mind, and consequently intellectual activity and experience, solely through the lens of thought, memory, or consciousness, but rather through noetic experience, treating the noetic ontos as a fundamental onto-formation for intellectual life. Through this concept, we attribute to the human mind the status of being: in itself, for itself, and beyond itself – not only conceptually but through lived noetic experience. One of the meanings of this onto-formation could also be that of the soul or spirit of the mind, transcendent, creative, capable of producing miracles through self-generative knowledge, construction, and the self-generation of new worlds.

This suggests that the intellectual sphere is not merely the result of physical processes but also an autonomous construction with its own

existence and experience. This vision contradicts rigid scientific and cybernetic models, asserting that the noetic ontos possesses the qualities of a being: autonomy, ideatic metabolism, and dynamic interaction with the environment. It is not merely a product of neurological processes but an ideatic, non-physical entity, autonomous, governed by its own laws, such as emergence, transemergence, sinemergence, conemergence, telegence, promergence, and others of the same kind. I do not explain them here, but readers can intuit their definitions and modes of operation.

Regarding the formation of noetic onto-formations, the process involves stages through which information solidifies as a being with a degree of autonomy or becomes part of the mental or noetic being. The process begins with the contact phase, where cognitive elements and information or knowledge interact, followed by acquisition and accumulation, when durable connections are created. Then, structures organize and gain autonomy, reaching a qualitative leap through constitution and holistization. Finally, ontification consecrates the new mental entity, the noetic ontos or onto-noetic formations, as part of the mind, alongside thought, memory, consciousness, and more, determining it as a being with its own existential attributes. Through ontification, information comes to life, becoming an active part of existence and intellectual experience. This process enables the human mind and intellect to function like a living organism, with metabolism, cyclicity, and self-regulation capacity. This level of complexity cannot be reduced to simple physical-chemical or algorithmic mechanisms.

Thus, through the noetic ontos and noetic experience, the human mind and intellect, intellectual experience, and intellectual life become living constructions and processes, capable of self-governance and creation, independent of biological determinism. This autonomy allows the mind and intellectual creativity or experience to create new realities, live through its own creations, and extend its existence beyond perceptions, constantly engaged in exploration, becoming, and self-transformation. This is also explained by the fact that, through the noetic ontos, the human mind asserts itself as a being with three major dimensions: in itself, for itself, and beyond itself.

On the Human Mind as a Being in Itself, for Itself, and Beyond Itself

Beyond the classical understanding and the representation shaped by science, the human mind, in itself, through its noetic being, can be described plastically as a dance of the self, of continuous self-transformation. It is not just a passive receptacle, but a living organism with autonomous functions and self-regulation. Like an organism, the mind metabolizes experiences, assimilates the essential, and eliminates the unnecessary, maintaining a dynamic balance between its compartments. Thoughts, emotions, and ideas are born, evolve, and disappear in a continuous cycle, defining noetic experience as an introspective and transcendent flow. The mind accesses deep layers of the self, discovering unseen connections and generating not just knowledge, but also authentic transformation. Self-transformation and rebirth become vital necessities, as the mind constantly reconstructs itself in search of a higher harmony. Every thought and connection shapes its internal architecture, making noetic experience not only a means but also the ultimate purpose of the mind. The mind gives meaning, ordering the noetic chaos and illuminating ignorance. Deep within, it discovers its essence, constantly seeking self-knowledge and understanding of the world. This process is an endless race in the universe of the epistemic/gnostic self, proving the extraordinary capacity for self-transformation. Self-reflection becomes the basis for forming a noetic image of the self, in a continuous dance between self-observation and perception.

The mind, as a being for itself, forms and reforms through a subtle play of self-observation and dialogue/confrontation with reality, with the environment. This reflection/relationship creates an epistemic situational-axiological image of the self, shaped by the culture and paradigms of humanity. The process of self-knowledge imposes on the mind a fluid identity, influenced both by cultural norms and deep introspection. In the face of alterity, the mind activates its protective mechanisms to maintain its balance, identity, and stature. These subtle processes allow it to operate contextually among the contradictions of existence, maintaining its continuity.

External noetic experience allows the mind, outside of itself, to be not only a passive observer but a creator of society and culture. Assimilating reality, it becomes the architect of new ideas, values, and worlds. It detaches itself from the limitations of the body and time, often sacrificing itself for higher ideals. Thus, the mind not only creates sublime artistic works but also innovative technologies and scientific discoveries that expand human knowledge. As a noetic being, the mind defines its actions

through its profound ontos, which connects it with the world. Noetic experience becomes the bridge between knowledge and creation, surpassing biological limits and aspiring to higher ideals. History shows that the human mind can transcend the body and temporal and spatial limitations, influencing and generating culture, civilization, and humanity.

Some Conclusive Considerations and On the Intellectual (and Human) Experience in Itself, for Itself, and Beyond Itself

In this article, I aim to offer a new and deeper perspective on intellectual experience, and implicitly on human experience, analyzing them through the lens of the concepts of noetic ontos, noetic experience, and the mind as a being, which I have introduced to readers as part of a project in recent articles or books published in the past few years. In this work, I have sought to pave the way for an essential reconsideration of how intellectual experience is represented, understanding it this time as much more than a cognitive, informational, or algorithmic process, or the simple processing of information, but as a near-demiurgic act – exponential, self-generative, and directed toward infinite creation, self-creation, exploration, and especially the reconstruction of the world in a different way.

In light of these considerations, we can conclude that human intellectual experience, and by extension human experience in general, is much more complex and profound than illustrated by contemporary scientific psychology, biology, and cybernetics, which tend to reduce intellect to an algorithmic mechanism for the linear, possibly bidimensional, processing of information and knowledge. Through the philosophical-ontological approach we propose, intellectual experience, in the wake of the human mind as a three-dimensional being, has a triple dimension: in itself, for itself, and beyond itself. These three levels of manifestation are, of course, not separate but synergistically complement each other.

In correlation with the manifestation and establishment of the human mind as a whole, intellectual experience first unfolds in itself, in the intimacy of the intellect, where ideas are born, developed, and refined. It is the sublime inner space of self-generative intellectual contemplation and the miraculous generation of new ideas, deep reflection, and understanding that does not require external validation. A philosopher asking the great

questions about existence or a mathematician analyzing the structure of a theorem experiences this purely inner dimension of thought. It is the moment when the intellect probes its own depths, before any clear formulation or external expression.

Once the new ideas and ideative constructions – the new worlds – are clarified and organized, intellectual experience turns toward "for itself." In this sense, the thinker not only reflects within, for a world inside themselves, but also structures and asserts their own understanding of the world. This is the moment when a writer discovers their authentic voice, when a researcher reaches a revelation in their field of study, or when a self-taught person transitions from mere accumulation of knowledge to integrating it into their own coherent system of thought. Intellectual experience is no longer just an analytical process but becomes part of the intellectual identity of the one living it, defining them and giving them an inner intellectual meaning.

Finally, almost any authentic intellectual act seeks to manifest, especially beyond itself. Once an idea is crystallized, it can no longer remain within itself. Rather than imploding, it tends to express itself, to be shared, to influence the world. This level of intellectual experience manifests in creation, communication, and the exchange of ideas that shape human culture and knowledge. A scholar publishing a discovery, an artist presenting their work, or a teacher transmitting knowledge to future generations are examples of this process, where what the human intellect produces no longer remains isolated but becomes an active factor for change, especially through culture, in society.

Many intellectual figures have explored and enriched human culture and civilization in all fields, using their intellectual experience and extraordinary minds. They have done this by detaching themselves from the demands, laws, and constraints of their own bodies and biological instincts of self-preservation, functioning at the highest degree as beings beyond themselves. Leonardo da Vinci, the genius of the Renaissance, perfectly embodied these facets of the mind that manifest fully outside itself. Embracing both art and science, his works exemplify a mind that embraced the world in all its complexity. In drama, William Shakespeare demonstrates, through his dramatic creations, the immense power of the human mind to shape reality through art. His famous "To be or not to be" monologue is a profound meditation on life and death, illustrating the capacity of the mind, human intellectual experience, and the accumulation of human culture for introspection and philosophical investigation. His works invite us to explore the depths of our own consciousness and marvel

at the mind's capacity for imagination and insight. The philosophical work of Immanuel Kant is a profound testimony to the power of the mind and human intellectual experience. His theories on knowledge, ethics, and aesthetics highlight their active role in shaping our understanding of reality, morality, and beauty. By framing the mind as the architect of experience, the source of moral law, and the judge of beauty, Kant highlights the immense creative and rational capacities inherent in human intelligence. Marie Curie, through the discovery of radioactivity, opened new frontiers in the understanding of matter, demonstrating how curiosity and perseverance can lead to world-changing revelations. Her work highlights the power of the human mind, connected to reality in all its facets, to transform humanity's existential conditions. In the realm of religion and spirituality, the legacy of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi, Persian poet, mystic, and philosopher, remains a testament to the profound power of the human mind. Rumi's works, infused with Sufism – a system of Islamic mystical belief – transcend the boundaries of time and culture, offering a window into the depths of the human mind's ability to reach the divine. In technology, Steve Jobs transformed not only the industry but also the daily lives of billions of people through Apple's innovations. His philosophy of design and cybernetic functionality demonstrated how the human mind can create technologies that transcend its own sphere, serving others and facilitating human progress and connectivity.

We cannot help but be convinced, following these arguments and considerations, that this triple dimension of intellectual experience underscores the fact that the human intellect is not a mere mechanism – uni- or bidimensional – for processing information, but a living entity capable of creating, reflecting, and transforming or recreating the world and humanity. It is, in fact, the very entity that created it. In light of these considerations, I believe it is essential to pay special attention to new concepts regarding the understanding of the human mind, intellect, and intellectual experience. If the human mind is viewed exclusively as a set of cognitive processes and functions, and intellectual experience is reduced to a simple mechanism for informational optimization, we risk negating the very essence of human existence. This excessively technical approach can transform the human being into an entity reduced to a biological algorithm or, even worse, into a cybernetic mechanism devoid of existential authenticity.

Intellectual experience must be understood from a deeper perspective, one that encompasses the ontological and noetic dimensions of existence. The human mind is not merely an information-processing system, but an

entity with an existential and creative dimension, capable of generating ideas, exploring abstract concepts, and creating cultural and civilizational worlds. This ontological three-dimensionality of the intellect is what truly defines humanity, distinguishing it from both the animal kingdom and the cybernetic world, which remain unidimensional or, at best, bidimensional.

As technology advances rapidly, we observe an alarming trend: the gradual reduction of this intellectual three-dimensionality. With the emphasis on neurology, artificial intelligence, and algorithmic optimization, the risk is that the human mind may come to be perceived as nothing more than a data processor, and intellectual experience reduced to a utilitarian function. This leads to a loss of depth and a diminishing of creative capacity, which could have major consequences for culture, civilization, and human identity.

If the great intellectual creators of humanity had lacked this profound dimension of intellect and intellectual experience, the world we live in would be infinitely poorer. Thinkers such as Plato, Kant, Einstein, and Heidegger did not limit themselves to mere cognitive processes, but explored ontological, ethical, and aesthetic dimensions that gave birth to fundamental visions of existence and knowledge. These were possible precisely because of a three-dimensional understanding of the human intellect, one that surpasses mere information processing and moves toward creation, reflection, and introspection.

However, the three-dimensionality of the intellect is not a privilege reserved only for great creators. It is essential for every individual, as it underpins the definition of humanity through the essential philosophical-ontological categories: human essence, human nature, and human condition. If we allow this dimension to be lost, along with the promotion of technological progress and the excessive technologization of society, we risk becoming unidimensional or bidimensional beings, devoid of depth, inner universes, creativity, and, ultimately, humanity. In reality, the danger does not only lie in the physical loss of humanity, but in the disappearance of the intellectual human, the creative human, the being who reflects and generates meaning. Reducing the human being to a mere technological or biological agent could mean the end of humanity, not in a physical sense, but in an intellectual and existential sense. Therefore, it is imperative to preserve and cultivate this three-dimensionality of the intellect, to encourage deep reflection, to protect the humanities, and to ensure that technology does not replace what truly makes a human… human.

In this regard, an essential solution is education, which must assume the role of guardian of intellectual complexity. We cannot allow educational

systems to be reduced to mere mechanisms for transmitting information, devoid of critical thinking, introspection, and creativity. Education must focus on the holistic development of the individual, on cultivating an open mind capable of questioning reality from multiple perspectives. At the same time, we must promote a balance between technological progress and the preservation of humanistic values. Technology must be a tool in the service of humanity, not a factor that redefines humanity in a reductive way. In this sense, integrating ethics into the development of new technologies becomes a necessity, so that progress aligns with authentic human values and needs. Therefore, to protect the complexity, depth, three-dimensionality, and authenticity of the intelectual and human experience, a collective awareness and sustained effort from all sectors of society – education, science, technology, and culture – are required. Only in this way can we ensure that the future of humanity will not be one of extreme simplification, but one of the continuous enrichment of the human spirit and experience.

Petru Stefaroi, 2025